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THE LUNDENSIAN THEOLOGY

BY

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I

As my readers will know, Sweden is a Lutheran country. We have a Lutheran state church - the Scandinavian countries are the only countries in the Protestant world where there are still state churches in the strict sense of this word. But in all these countries there are also a number of Free Churches, Congregational, Baptists, Methodists and others, and everywhere there is full religious freedom. Theologically Scandinavia is dominated by the faculties at the state universities. The Free Churches are comparatively new and have little theological scholarship.

Sweden possesses two old universities, those of Uppsala and Lund, and both have theological faculties. From the beginning of the present century most of the professors have been liberal. A radical criticism of the Bible was introduced, and occasionally leading liberals arranged conferences where they sought to present their views to a larger public. In 1919 such a conference was held, and the addresses given there were published in a book called *The Religious Situation Today and the Church*, which caused a great stir among the Christians of the country. They learnt that Christ, according to the liberal view, was only a man, that no miracles ever happened and that the important part of the Bible was Christ's ethical teaching. Bible-believers naturally raised a protest, resulting in a long-continued controversy.

But in the middle of the "twenties" two Lundensian professors began to throw out new signals, declaring that the theological crisis now was overcome. They were Gustaf Aulén and Anders Nygren, who later became bishops of the Swedish Lutheran Church. Both of them have also taken a very active part in the ecumenical movement. They are now comparatively advanced in years; and their books have been translated into German, English and other languages, and (especially those of Dr. Nygren) have exercised some considerable international influence.[1]

It was about thirty years ago that these professors began to declare that the theological crisis was overcome; and as this declaration was accompanied by a strong condemnation of the old liberalism, many Christians believed that these Lundensian theologians had returned to the Bible and to Biblical Christianity.

The Lundensian opposition to the old liberalism was very like that of Karl Barth and his dialectical school. I quote a passage from Dr. Aulén's criticisms of the liberalism represented by Ritschl and Harnack: "The Ritschlian theology, which was dominant during the latter decades of the nineteenth century, endeavored chiefly to concentrate divine revelation in and around the 'historical Jesus.' The purpose was to oppose both the metaphysical formulas of ancient Christology and the idealistic and speculative Christology of the first half of the nineteenth century. It implied a return to the 'purely historical' figure of Jesus and to his teaching according to the Gospel.

A closer examination of this line of thought makes it clear, however, that this supposedly historical picture is in reality an invention. When, for example, Ritschl makes the teaching of Jesus concerning the Kingdom of God central, the conception of the Kingdom which he defines is certainly not a mere return to Jesus' strongly eschatological teaching, according to the Gospel. On the contrary, Ritschl's concept of the Kingdom with its decidedly this-worldly, ethico-cultural oreintation is obviously dependent upon idealistic theories, and especially the thought-forms of Kant. It is analogous to Harnack's presentation of 'the essence of Christianity'. In his famous book *What is Christianity?*, which appeared at the turn of the century, he locates the essence of Christianity in Jesus' teaching of the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the eternal value of the human soul. It is clear that the definition of the content of revelation here given is strangely similar to the old theology of the 'Enlightenment'; its 'God, virtue, and immortality' reappear in a modern dress." (*Faith of the Christian Church*, p. 54 f.). But, as we have said, though this criticism of the old liberalism is very similar to that which Barth and Brunner directed against it, the conclusion must not be drawn that the Lundensian theologians had returned to the Bible. On the contrary, Dr. Aulén declared that he took a more radical attitude toward the trustworthiness of the Gospels than did the old liberals.

What is, then, the new teaching of the Lundensian theology? If we wish to know it will be advisable to turn to the younger colleague of Dr. Aulén, Dr. Anders Nygren, who is regarded by many as being the more important of the two. In his famous work *Agape and Eros*[2] he has set forth the central teaching of the school which he represents. The starting point in this work is a doctrine of *basic motifs* (the English translation employs the expression "fundamental ideas", which seems to be a too general translation of the Swedish term.) Dr. Nygren defines a "basic motif" as follows: — "A fundamental theological idea (motif) may be defined as the answer given by some type of outlook to a question which is deep and wide enough to be called fundamental" (*Agape and Eros*, I, p. 27). He illustrates this from the sphere of art in the following way: - "The fundamental idea of a work of art is that which makes it into a unified whole, determines its structure, and gives it its character. In music we have the working out of a central theme, which constantly recurs in new variations, and is the subject upon which the whole is built up." (*Agape and Eros*, ib.)

Dr. Nygren then goes on to point out that "there are certain ideas, or themes, which constantly recur in fresh variations and combinations, but in such a way that the old theme can still be recognised. Quite early in the history of thought we find the great fundamental questions asked, concerning the True, the Beautiful, the Good, and above all, the Eternal: the problems, that is to say, of Knowledge, of Esthetics, of Ethics, and of Religion". "A fundamental idea, in the sense in which we use the term, is an answer given by some particular type of outlook to one or more of these questions".

It should be noticed that these different spheres - of Knowledge, of Esthetics, of Ethics and of Religion - are separated from each other. Questions concerning what is true cannot be asked or answered within the esthetic sphere - nobody asks if a picture is true, or if a work of art is true. Does this mean that the predicates "true" and "false" should not be used within the sphere of religion? It evidently does. A younger professor in Systematic Theology at the Lund University, a disciple of Dr. Nygren, Dr. Bring, very often affirms that statements which belong to the religious sphere have "a non-theoretical character" and that they are, consequently, neither true nor false.

What should then be said of the historical facts, given in the

New Testament and enumerated in the second article of the Apostles' Creed? We will find the answer later, when we have analysed Dr. Aulén's treatment of these facts.

II

Dr. Nygren states that the basic "motif" - that is, the fundamental idea - of Christianity is *Agape*, love. *Agape* here primarily means God's love to man. Dr. Nygren's definition of it contains four essential points. (1) *Agape is spontaneous and 'uncaused'*; that is to say, it is vain to look for a cause or explanation of God's love in the worthiness of the men whom He loves. This is the most conspicuous feature of the Divine love as it is manifested in Jesus. God's love is 'uncaused'; not of course in the sense that it is arbitrary or capricious; on the contrary, it is necessary because it belongs to the very nature of God Himself. Again, God's love is always spontaneous; it is not called out by anything outside itself. Hence, when it is said that God loves man, this is not a judgment on what man is like, but on what God is like. It is this Divine love, spontaneous and 'uncaused', which characterizes the action of Jesus in seeking out the lost, and consorting with tax-collectors and sinners . . . (2) *Agape is indifferent to human merit.* This is implied in what has already been said. It is not that for Jesus the righteous and the sinners simply change places, as if it were a matter of a simple inversion of values, when He comes 'not to call the righteous, but sinners'; it is that the idea of human value and merit disappears altogether. When God, who is holy, loves the sinner, there is no question of merit; He loves the sinner, not because of his sin, but in spite of his sin . . . and He does not love the righteous on the ground of his righteousness. (3) *Agape is creative.* This is the deepest reason for the spontaneous and 'uncaused' character of God's love. The love of which we are thinking is God's love, and God is the creator. It is not that God loves that which is in itself worthy to be loved but, on the contrary, *that which in itself is without value acquires value by the fact it is the object of God's love. Agape* is the direct opposite of that love which is called out by the worthiness of its object. The man whom God loves has not any value in himself. His value consists simply in the fact that God loves him. This is the central and decisive point in the Christian conception of *Agape.* But it

has been very seriously obscured in modern theology. Since the days of Ritschl it has been usual to speak of 'the infinite value of the human soul' as one af the basic ideas of Christianity, and to associate it with 'God's fatherly love' . . . (4) *Agape opens the way of fellowship with God.* As, in the Christian conception, *Agape* is the characteristic mark of God's relation to man, so the Divine *Agape,* as a creative power, opens for man the way of fellowship with God. The consequence is that all other ways by which man may seek to attain to God are set aside as false ways; primarily the way of legal righteousness and merit, but no less certainly also the effort of the sinner to return to God by the amendment of his life (the English translation of Dr. Nygren's book has "amendment", but the word used in the Swedish edition means "repentance"). Amendment cannot, any more than righteousness, constitute a claim on the Divine love."

I have given these extensive quotations in order to show what is characteristic in Dr. Nygren's doctrine of love as being the basic "motif" (fundamental idea) of Christianity. Dr. Nygren goes on to state that there is another "motif" which is the diametrical opposite of this idea, namely *Eros,* which is egocentric love. (That is, love which is based on, or centred in, *self*). Dr. Nygren compares these two ideas in the following way: - "*Eros* is desire of good for one's self - *Agape* is self-giving. *Eros* is man's effort to ascend - *Agape* comes down from above. *Eros* is man's way to God - *Agape* is God's way to man. *Eros* is *man's* achievement, the endeavor of man to attain salvation - *Agape* is a free gift, a salvation which is the work of Divine love. *Eros* is egocentric love, a form of self-assertion of the highest, noblest, sublimest kind - *Agape* is unselfish love, which 'seeketh not its own', and freely spends itself. *Eros* is a will to have and to possess, resting on a sense of need - *Agape* freely gives and spends, for it rests on God's own richness and fulness. *Eros* is primarily human love, and God is the object of *Eros* - *Agape* is primarily God's own love, for God is *Agape. Eros* recognizes value in its object, and therefore loves it - *Agape* loves, and creates value in its object." (ib. I, p. 265).

Dr. Nygren understands the history of Christian ideas as a fight between these two "motifs". Mostly there has been, according to him, some confusion between them. But in primitive Christianity as presented in the Synoptic Gospels and in the writings

of Paul and in the Reformation (at least in Martin Luther's writings) we find the pure *Agape* "motif".

III

How has Dr. Nygren found out that this idea of *Agape* is the basic "motif" of Christianity? It will very soon be clear that he has not arrived at his results by Bible-research. He quotes the Bible, but he does so in a very strange way. First, he never quoin the Old Testament. The reason is that the *Agape* idea, according to Dr. Nygren, is not to be found there. Some preparation for this idea may be discovered in the older Scriptures, but "it is first in Christianity that the fundamental change from egocentric to theocentric religion takes place" (ib. I, p. 30). On the whole, he says, the Old Testament represents *Nomos*, the Law, which is an inferior idea.

As regards the New Testament (according to the Professor) the idea of love is used as a measure by which its component books are to be valued. The pure idea of love, he says, is found in the Synoptic Gospels and in the writings of Paul, while the writings of John - the "apostle of love" - take a hesitating attitude to *Agape*. In John's writings, he tells us, "God is Love, not merely in relation to fallen man, but in His own eternal nature. Thus the Johannine conception has a cosmological, metaphysical accent, and it is right to speak of a 'Metaphysic of *Agape*'. [3] Primarily and ultimately, God's *Agape* is the eternal love of the Father for the Son: 'Thou lovedst Me', He says, 'before the foundation of the world" (John 17: 24). This eternal love is the self-imparting of the Father to the Son, and it stands as the basis of the self-imparting of the Son to the disciples, and of the disciples to their brethren . . . The 'doubleness' which this conception necessarily involves is not hard to see. On the one hand, the idea of God's spontaneous and 'uncaused' love is carried to its furthest limit: God's love has its ground in His own being; it is His own very essence . . . But, on the other hand, this metaphysic of *Agape* cannot escape from the peril of rationalisation and explanation which is inherent in all metaphysics. If the love of the Father for the Son is the pattern of all *Agape*, it is impossible to avoid the question: How can *Agape* retain its nature as essentially 'uncaused'? . . . In the result, the Johannine conception of

Agape begins to take a somewhat hesitating attitude, between 'caused' and 'uncaused" (ib. I, p. 112f.).

This statement on the Johannine teaching concerning love is, in fact, an admission that, if the New Testament passages on love are taken as a whole, some of them contradict Dr. Nygren's idea of *Agape*. Thus it is evident that Dr. Nygren for his purpose has selected some New Testament books, and such of their writings which do not agree with his idea of *Agape* are by him placed on a lower level. This proves that the idea of *Agape* is not the result of a careful study of the New Testament writings and a belief in their inspiration as the word of God.

In reality the Professor has found the idea of *Agape* by a comparison between Christianity and other religions. The result of such a comparison seems to him to be that all other religions follow an egocentric line, and represent *Eros*, but Christianity represents the theocentric (or God-centred) point of view. I quote: "There are two ways in which the problem of the Eternal has been stated, according as it is viewed from the side of the ego (self) or from the side of the Eternal; in the one case we get an egocentric, in the other a theocentric religion. But these are really two quite different questions; in the one case God is sought as the final satisfaction of the needs and desires of the individual; in the other, as the Almighty, to whom belongs absolute dominion over the human ego. In so far as the religious question has now come to be envisaged from a theocentric rather than an egocentric point of view, it is Christianity that has made the change . . . The study of the fundamental ideas in the religions of the world shows always a dominant group of ideas of an egocentric character. It is first in Christianity - if we group with Christianity the preparation for it in the Old Testament - that the fundamental change from egocentric to theocentric religion takes place" (ib. I, p. 30). It might, by the way, be remarked that Dr. Nygren here speaks a little hesitatingly about the Old Testament. There is in these earlier Scriptures, he says, "a preparation for" the idea of *Agape* as found in the later Scriptures. The Old Testament writings could, thus, not be placed among documents which represent the line of *Eros*. They represent *Nomos*, the Law, which is a parallel of the *Eros* line. I quote again: - "It was an axiom of Jewish legal religion that God loves the righteous and the godly, and does not love the sinner and the unrighteous; this is the

assumption of the legal outlook. But Jesus comes not to call the righteous, but sinners" (ib. I, p. 158). From the context it is evident that "Jewish legal religion" also includes Old Testament religion. Also here we meet in fact egocentric religion - man seeks to ascend to God, namely by his works. Since (according to Professor Nygren) the Law has no legitimate place in Christianity there can be no question of God's wrath or judgement, there will be no need of an atonement in the Biblical meaning of this word, and there could be no eternal damnation.

Dr. Nygren certainly speaks of the Cross of Christ and of the Atonement. In expounding Paul's doctrine of Agape he says: "When we ask how God's *Agape* is manifested, we are referred to the Cross of Christ. To all the various ways in which the Synoptic Gospels set forth the idea of *Agape*, Paul adds the one final word, the Cross. The death of Jesus on the Cross is the absolutely supreme manifestation of God's *Agape*. It is the same thought that we meet in 1 John 3 : 16: "Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us". Had we never known the manifestation of love on the Cross, we might have known the Christian meaning of love; we should never have known in its highest and deepest meaning, God's own love, *Agape*. The testimony of the Cross is that *Agape*-love is a love which gives itself, pours itself out, even to the uttermost". (ib. I, p. 86).

Thus we learn that God's *Agape* is manifested in the death of Christ. But we must go on and ask: What *happened* in His death? If nothing happened in Christ's death it is impossible to maintain that God's love is manifested therein. But from Dr. Nygren's starting point one thing is clear beforehand, and that is that His death is no satisfaction for our sins. Satisfaction as well as guilt are legal notions, and because of that they are incompatible with the idea of *Agape*.

What he Lundensian theology teaches concerning the Atonement is extensively set forth in a special book by Dr. Aulén. Its Swedish title should be translated *The Christian Idea of Atonement*. Its English title is *Christus Victor*, i.e. "The Victorious Christ". His aim in this book is to expound the "classic" idea of atonement. He defines this idea in the following way: "This type of view may be described provisionally as the 'dramatic'. Its central thema is the idea of the Atonement as a Divine conflict and victory; Christ - Christus Victor - fights against and triumphs over the evil powers of the world, the 'tyrants' under which mankind is in bondage and suffering, and in Him God reconciles the world to Himself." (ib. p. 20). These evil powers are enumerated in Dr. Aulén's exposition of Paul's doctrine of redemption: "Like the Church Fathers, Paul groups together sin and death, and inseparably connects them. He makes considerably less mention of the Devil than most of the Fathers; instead, in some important passages he speaks of a great complex of demonic forces, 'principalities and powers', which Christ has overcome in the conflict. Then, again, among the powers which hold man in bondage he ranges the Law" (ib. p. 83). Dr. Aulén tries to show that neither the New Testament nor Luther really teach satisfaction. He maintains that this doctrine was developed a long time after the New Testament age, on Western, Latin soil. He finds the beginnings of this doctrine in the writings of Tertullian. There, he says, "we find the fundamental conceptions of *satisfaction* and *merit*" (ib. p. 97). But this Latin theory of the Atonement first appears fully developed in the *Cur Deus Homo?* of Anselm.

Further it should be pointed out that Dr. Aulén in another work, *The Christian Idea of God*, - as far as I know not translated into English - openly declares that the New Testament teaching concerning the Devil and the demons has a "mythological" character. They are, consequently, no realities at all. If this be so, Christ has fought His fight against nothing!

Only two critical remarks should be made on Dr. Aulén's notion of the "classic" idea of Atonement: (1) Modern scholarship, liberal as well as conservative, stresses that according to the New Testament Christ's suffering on the cross was expiatory and substitutionary. (It would be sufficient to refer to different articles in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum NT* and to Vincent Taylor's books). (2) Only a very scanty knowledge of Luther's writings would make it clear that he teaches the doctrine of vicarious satisfaction. He states that it is paganism (the faith "of the Turks and Jews") to imagine that God is gracious to men "without cost", i.e. without a vicarious satisfaction.

Another consequence of the *Agape* doctrine is that there is no room for eternal condemnation. A God who is love and nothing more cannot punish or condemn. Thus there is no hell. On the other side Dr. Aulén does not teach an *apokatastasis* (universal restoration). In his handbook of dogmatics, *The Faith of the*

Christian Church (p. 178) he says "It would be possible to construct an *apokatastasis* as a self-evident final goal only if divine love were found to operate as an irresistible force of coercion. When Christian faith gives due consideration to the manner in which divine love accomplishes its work - by means of an inner compulsion, without which it would not be love - and also takes into account the actual fact of opposition to this love, it must also reckon with the possibility of a hardening of the heart which definitely separates itself from fellowship with divine love." Scripture most emphatically teaches that there is an everlasting punishment for unbelievers. The Lundensian theology replaces this doctrine with the supposition that a man might also in the eternity endlessly resist the divine love. But the underlying unexpressed assumption is of course that also in the eternity a man has the opportunity of coming into fellowship with God. For "Christian faith must reckon with the unlimited possibilities of divine love" (ib. p. 178).

A practical consequence of the Lundensian *Agape* doctrine is that the striving of the individual for his salvation is looked upon as selfishness, as belonging to egocentric religion. This is not expressly said by Dr. Aulén and Dr. Nygren, but it is most emphatically declared by many of their numerous disciples in the Scandinavian countries. Especially do they fight Pietism. As is well known Pietism is a movement in Lutheran countries emphasizing conversion and a holy life and condemning worldly amusements, such as theatres and dancing. All revival movements within Lutheran churches have a Pietistic character. In Finland, where there is more Pietism than any other Scandinavian country, the disciples of the Lundensian theology among the Lutheran clergy have begun a real war against it.

IV

We propose in closing to offer some concluding critical remarks on the Lundensian theology. As regards its teaching on the idea of *Agape* especially the following points should be noted: - It is of course true that the central teaching of the New Testament is that God is love. Sometimes the very words *agápe* and *agapán* are used in this connection. It would be sufficient to quote some of the most important passages. "For God so loved the world,

that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3 : 16). "But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5 : 8). "The life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, that faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2 : 20). "God is love" (1 John 4 : 8). But a comparison between the Lundensian idea of *Agape* and the New Testament teaching on the love of God very soon will result in the discovery that there is a great difference between the two. It may, for instance, be found that the love of God referred to in the New Testament is never spoken of as being "uncaused". But above all it must be stressed that love is the fundamental idea not only of the later Scriptures but also of the Old Testament; while according to Dr. Nygren the central "motif" of the latter is *Nomos*, the Law (although he admits that there are accidental traits preparing the way for the New Testament idea of love). Many passages in the older Scriptures may be quoted proving that the love of God occupies a large place therein, especially from the Books of Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. It should also be emphasized that the New Testament never indicates that it teaches a new doctrine of God's love, unknown or only imperfectly known by the Old Testament. Again and again it refers to the former Scriptures - the only thing which according to the New Testament is really new is that the salvation which is predicted in the Scriptures committed to Israel has now been realized. Thus there is no foundation whatever for Dr. Nygren's statement: *"The idea of Agape is a new creation of Christianity. It sets its mark on the whole of Christianity. Without it nothing that is Christian would be Christian"* (ib. I, p. 32).

Further Dr. Nygren thinks that what is completely new in the New Testament idea of *Agape* is that God receives sinners. He says: - "'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners', says Jesus (Mark 2 : 17); and in these words He turns the Jewish scale of values upside down. These words express in the sharpest possible form His assault on the traditional outlook. It is only necessary to remember the associations of the term 'the righteous' in the Jewish mind. All men naturally applaud the godly and the righteous, and condemn the ungodly and sinners; but for the Jew his natural feeling was powerfully strengthened by the place

assigned to the Law. The righteous man loved God's Law, and the Law ennobled him" (ib. I, p. 46).

But in the Old Testament also God calls sinners. A great number of passages in which He does so might be quoted, especially from the prophets. I quote, for example, Jer. 3 : 22: "Return, ye backsliding children I will heal your backslidings". God calls sinners, but it is self-evident that a sinner who has repented will not go on living in sin. He will turn away from. it and obey God's will. This is exactly what happens also in the New Testament. When Christ met the man from the pool of Bethesda who had been healed, He said to him: "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee" (John 5 : 14).

To the Jews who were contemporary with Christ it was also clearly understood that God receives and forgives repentant sinners. The confessions of sin and the prayers for forgiveness which we find in the Synagogue liturgy give convincing evidence of this. Christ did not give offence to the Pharisees by His teaching of forgiveness to sinners but they were scandalized *that He Himself forgave sins*. When Christ said to the sick man: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven" the Scribes said within themselves: "This man blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but God only?" (Mark 2 : 5f.). This intimates that it is not a certain teaching concerning God's forgiveness, but the divinity of Christ which was in question.

It is, consequently, evident that Dr. Nygren is incorrect in supposing that the new element which Christianity brought in the world is the idea of *Agape*. Surely Christianity brought something new, but what is new is the Person of Christ - the second person of the Holy Trinity having become man.

What, then, is the Christology of the Lundensian theology? I have dealt with this matter rather extensively in my book *Ecumenism and the Bible* (the chapter on Bishop Aulén's theology, pp. 185—194). As appears from quotations given in this book Bishop Aulén, being an obedient follower of Immanuel Kant, rejects metaphysics, and, consequently, he denies the true Deity of Christ. To Aulén, Christ is only a man whose will is one with the Father's will, and the incarnation merely means that the divine love is manifested in the man Jesus Christ.

The principal objection against the Lundensian theology must

be that it tries to derive everything in Christianity from the idea of *Agape*, and that it disregards such parts of the Bible as seem incompatible with it. Especially dangerous is it that it ignores the Law, the wrath of God and Divine judgment. In reality it also throws overboard the essential historical facts of the Biblical redemptive history (I refer once more to my chapter on Bishop Aulén's theology, referred to above). Since the essence of Christianity is understood as being *an idea* - a specific idea of love, *Agape* - the fundamental historical facts concerning Christ which are given in the New Testament and summarised in the second article of the Apostles' Creed are necessarily of no decisive importance.

As regards the attitude of the Lundensian theology to the Law of God, it should be noted that the New Testament, so far from rejecting the Law, from one point of view lays still more stress on it than did the Pharisees. Christ teaches that the Law is unalterable, which was also the teaching of the Pharisees. "Verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the Law, till all things be accomplished" (Mat. 5 : 18). But the New Testament teaches, what was contrary to Pharisaic doctrine, that the claim of the Law is absolute and irrevocable. Two passages state this most emphatically. In Gal. 3 : 10 we read: "Cursed is every one which continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them". And James 2 : 10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is become guilty of all". According to the Pharisees a man's trespasses were taken away when he repents and returns to obey the Law. God forgives his sins, and it is sufficient that he now has the intention to be obedient. There was no teaching that every commandment must in any case be fulfilled. But the New Testament teaching is that every single commandment must be obeyed; and further that if God ever overlooked, or ignored men's sins he would not be just. In Rom. 3 : 26 we read: "For the showing, I say, of his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus". Such a view of God's righteousness was quite alien to that of the Pharisees.

Moreover, the New Testament states that the wrath of God is revealed against all who transgress the Law; and since all men

are born in sin they are "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2 : 3). The Apostle Paul declares that on the last day, which is called "the day of wrath" (Rom. 2 : 5), God will judge all men, and "render to every man according to his works" (Rom. 2 : 6).

If it is acknowledged that God reveals Himself in the Law, the New Testament passages on guilt, judgment, and punishment can be understood, as also its teaching on the Atonement. According to Scripture Christ fulfilled the Law in the stead of man: "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, *made under the law*, to redeem them that were under the law" (Gal. 4 : 4f.). Christ vicariously suffered the punishment which men had incurred by their transgression: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. 3 : 13). *In this God's love is revealed.* He sent His only begotten Son who suffered the punishment which was due to us. The Lundensian theology, on the contrary, as we have seen, speaks of God's *Agape* as an *idea* proclaimed by Christ (according to the Synoptic Gospels), and by the Apostle Paul, and that the Cross of Christ was a demonstration of this love. But the death of Christ is a meaningless event if there is no divine wrath and punishment. How fully every fact and doctrine of Scripture falls into its place, and becomes part of a coherent whole, when the Old Testament and the New are alike accepted as the Word of God!

[1] Nygren's work *Agape and Eros* was translated into English by A. G. Hebert and P. S. Watson (1932, 1938). This translation is quoted in the present article. A new English translation was published in 1952. Aulén's book *Christus Victor* was published in an English translation in 1932, and his Handbook of dogmatics, entitled *The Faith of the Christian Church*, in 1948. - It may be mentioned that the American theologian Dr. Nels F. S. Ferré who is born a Swede is essentially a Lundensian. His books are dominated by the Lundensian idea of *Agape*, and his earliest book, *Swedish Contributions to Modern Theology* (1939) deals with the Lundensian theology.

[2] Readers unacquainted with Greek may find it helpful to know that *Agape* and *Eros* stand for the higher and lower forms of love; the heavenly and the earthly. (Editor)

[3] This expression may be broadly defined as meaning "a higher form of philosophy dealing with heavenly, or God-centred, love." (Editor)